COMIC SHOP NEWS
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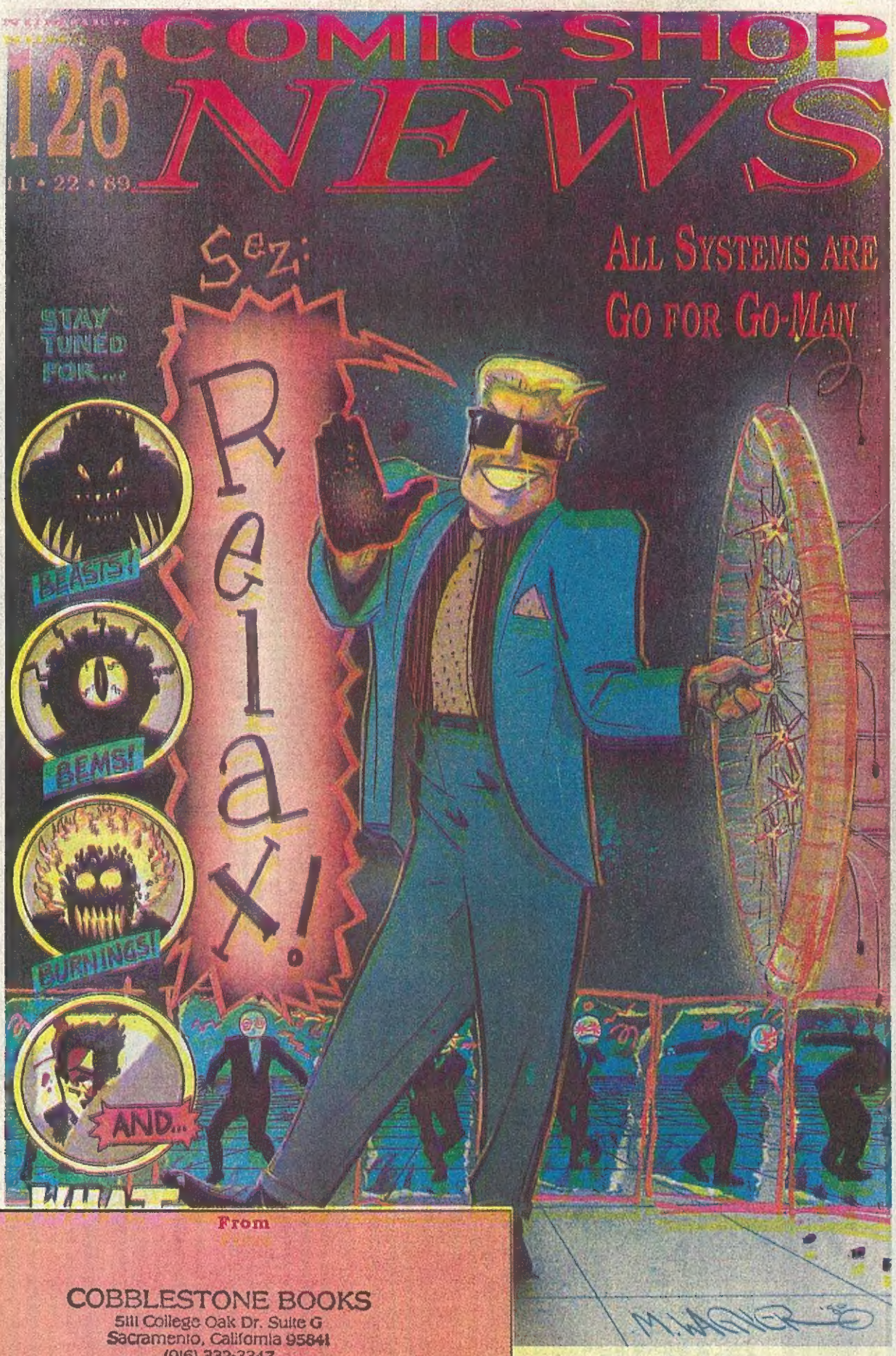

From

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A Comics Specialty Outlet

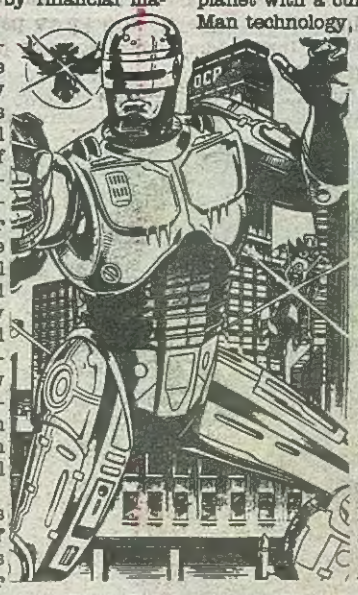
Marvel Kicks Off 90's with Half-Dozen First Issues

Last Year, Marvel offered readers six series debuts in the first half of the year. The schedule was so well received by fans that Marvel plans to do the same thing this year, with a new series scheduled to debut each month from January through June.

In January, ***Robocop*** debuts. This new series will be much closer in tone to the original movie than the to the animated feature; Marvel stresses that this will be gritty sf action-adventure. ***Robocop*** will be written by Alan Grant and pencilled by Lee Sullivan, with inks by Kim DeMulder.

John Byrne's new series ***Namor the Sub-Mariner*** begins in February. This ongoing monthly title will bring Namor to the world of humans, where he will attempt to play the financial games so popular with humanity. Byrne's Sub-Mariner will establish a company to sell off some of the wealth of the oceans, hoping to take over the surface world by financial maneuvering.

An all-new ***Ghost Rider*** returns in March. This isn't the same Ghost Rider fans may remember from many years ago; this is an all new "spirit of vengeance," according to Marvel's Promotions Manager Steve Saffel. The new ***Ghost Rider*** will be written by Howard Mackie, pencilled by Xavier Saltares, and inked by Mark Texeira. "This is a new Ghost Rider, wreaking vengeance on those who prey on the innocent," Saffel said.



Jim Valentino's new ***Guardians of the Galaxy*** series is now scheduled for April debut. "This is the Marvel Universe of the 30th Century," Saffel said. "The Guardians are searching for the legendary lost shield of Captain America. What they find is an entire planet with a culture based on the Iron Man technology, populated by a people who call themselves the Stark." Future issues will reveal what happened to the Silver Surfer, Galactus, Firelord, and the Watcher--and will feature a very different Doctor Strange.

In May, Marvel will present ***The New Warriors.*** These heroes, recently featured in Thor, will star in their own book, courtesy of writer Fabian Nicieza and artist Mark Bagley. Led by Night Thrasher, the group consists of Namorita, Kid Nova, Firestar, Marvel Boy, and Speedball.

In June, Todd McFarlane will make his writing debut on the new book ***Spider-Man***, which he will also illustrate. ***Spider-Man*** will specialize in six-issue tight drama mini-series-within-a-series, a la the Kraven the Hunter saga. The first adventure features the menace of the Owl and the Lizard. According to McFarlane, since Daredevil stole away Spidey villain the Kingpin, it's only fair for Spider-Man to reestablish the Owl as a major--and very menacing--villain. For more information see the Spotlight on Todd McFarlane starting on page four.

In addition to these six series debuts, Marvel will also kick off 1990 with the already-reported ***Marvel Year In Review,*** a bookshelf-format look back at 1989 in the Marvel Universe. The $3.95 book will have tongue in cheek articles and ads from folks like the Latverian Tourist Bureau and Damage Control. Todd McFarlane is doing a new cover for this book.

by CHRISTINA LEONE

NUMBER 126 (1 • 22 • '89)

COMIC SHOP NEWS™

From

A Comics Specialty Outlet

Go Man Goes On November Schedule

Go-Man, the hip hero of Hyperia, is coming back to comics in November in a regular series of his own. Even better for fans who aren't familiar with ***Go-Man***'s exploits, the same company that is presenting the new ***Go-Man*** series will be offering readers a chance to read the old Go-Man adventures in a graphic novel compilation.

"The hero for the cool...Brittle art on top of uproar writing" is the way Matt Howarth, creator of ***Those Annoying Post Brothers***, describes ***Go-Man.*** Dave Sim, ***Cerebus*** creator, says that ***Go-Man*** is "where adventure television ends and the future begins...If you read no other comic besides ***Cerebus*** this year, you must read ***Go-Man.***" And these aren't the only popular comics writers and artists raving about the series, which is set to debut in late November. ***Mage*** mentor ***Matt Wagner*** is even contributing the cover for the first issue, along with an introduction. Other creators, including Don Simpson of ***Megaton Man***, have signed up for future covers.

Go-Man is the story of Hyperia, a grandiose capital of culture that is a city in which "the rich get richer and the poor get entertained," according to Caliber Press. One of the largest corporations in Hyperia is the Neuherz Foundation, which is determined to use its abilities to create a safer world. One of its most successful agents is Go-Man. Go-Man has become a celebrity hero in Hyper City, the world of entertainment and marketing and media, and a frightening figure in Hypetown, the home of the underworld, the sleaze, and the inhuman.

The original ***Go-Man*** stories appeared in Nerve, where they received a great deal of critical acclaim, but not a wide readership. ***Go-Man*** creator Bill Widener and Nerve publisher Starlen Baxter were convinced that the series had too much potential to be forgotten, though, so they approached Gary Reed of Caliber Press about continuing the series. Not only did they reach an agreement on the new series, but they also made a deal to offer a ***Go-Man/Mack the Knife*** "flip book" compilation reprinting the entire Nerve Publications' series!

Go-Man will be published as a 32-page black and white comic book priced at $1.50. It will appear as the same time as the ***Go-Man/Mack the Knife*** "Flip Book," which will feature the Go-Man stories from ***Nerve #1-5*** and the Mack the Knife tales from ***Nerve #4-6.*** This will comprise the entire "Gooberville" storyline, which featured the lead character stuck in the town of Gooberville where old cartoon characters are put out to pasture. Each series will be cover featured on one side of the collection, which can be flipped like an old Ace Double (or for those of you too young to remember those, like ***A-1***). The ***Go-Man/Mack the Knife Flip Book*** will feature 128 pages of material for $9.95.

by CLIFF BIGGERS

Strange In a Stranger Land

It's bad enough when your girlfriend lives out of town and you only get to see her on weekends. At least you can give her a quick phone call during the week. Imagine Adam Strange's problems. His girlfriend--now his wife--lives across the galaxy, many millions of miles away, and he can only see her for a brief time when the zeta-beam takes him from Earth to Rann!

But what if the zeta-beam could be improved to allow Adam Strange to move to Rann forever, where he can join Alanna and his soon-to-be-born child and live as a family?

That's the set-up for ***Adam Strange***, a three-issue prestige-format limited series scheduled for mid-January release from DC. The series brings Adam Strange back in the spotlight after too many years as an almost-forgotten supporting character--but it also presents some interesting and provocative changes in the Adam Strange mythos.

Adam Strange first came to the attention of comics fans over three decades ago when he was introduced in ***Showcase #17***. His success in his short ***Showcase*** run led to the introduction of an Adam Strange lead feature in the science-fiction title ***Mystery In Space.*** Adam Strange's adventures in that series earned the series a reputation as one of the best-written sf series of all time. Adam Strange's series in ***Mystery in Space*** even acted as a host to the Justice League and Hawkman, who appeared in various issues.

More recently, Adam Strange appeared in ***Swamp Thing*** #58 and #59--but the situation on the idyllic planet of Rann had changed. Now the planet was turning increasingly sterile, and extinction loomed. Adam Strange, formerly the hero of two worlds, was held in contempt by the people of Rann. But in the midst of this sterile gloom came the news that Alanna was pregnant...

Adam Strange, the three-issue prestige-format limited series, continues from the events of ***Swamp Thing*** #58 and #59 . It also explores a hitherto-undeveloped side of Adam Strange's life: his childhood on Earth and his relationship with his estranged Earth family--a family he has almost forgotten in his quest for happiness on Rann.

Adam Strange will also further develop the world of Rann. The series will present problems that Adam Strange never dreamed of..."problems that will change Rann and its citizens forever," according to DC.

Adam Strange is written by DC Comics design director Richard Bruning and illustrated by Andy Kubert with color art by Adam Kubert. The painted covers will be illustrated by Andy Kubert with blue-line color by Adam Kubert. The first issue, priced at $3.95, will be available on January 18th.

by WAYNE LEE

NEWSBRIEFS

SILVER SURFER SOARS IN NEW HARDCOVER

The long-awaited and much-mentioned Stan Lee-Keith Pollard Silver Surfer graphic novel the Enslavers is finally scheduled for hardcover publication. The book is set for an early-February release; in the book, the satellite Voyager brings a race of aliens to Earth. These aliens intend to enslave the human race to use them as a power source; once they arrive on Earth, though, they find the super-heroes are the best power source of all. It's up to the Silver Surfer and Mr. Fantastic to stop them. This hardcover will guest star most of the super-heroes in the Marvel Universe. The 64-page book should reach comic shops on February 2nd; it will be priced at $16.95.

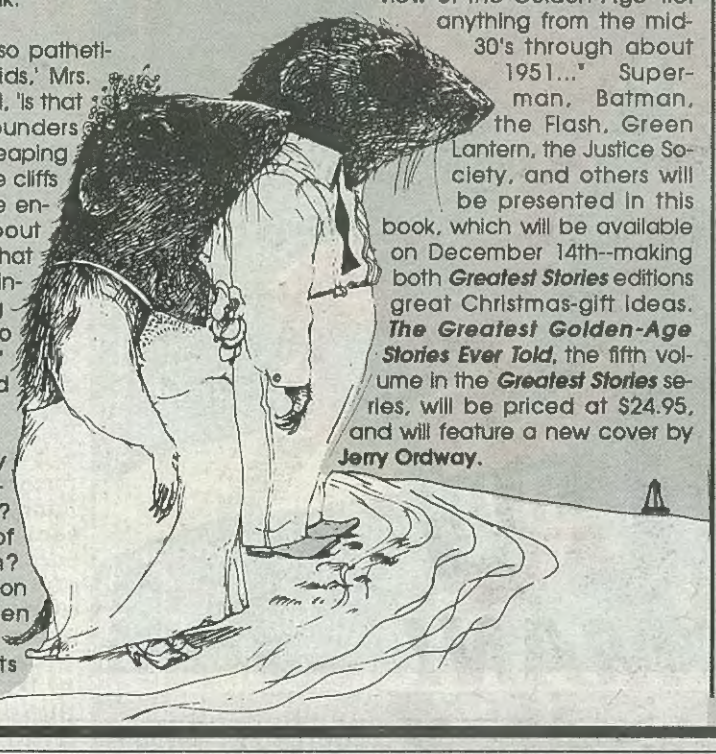
FANTAGRAPHICS RECEIVES NOMINATION

Fantagraphics Books, one of the foremost publishers in the area of sophisticated non-superhero comics, has been nominated for the prestigious *Carey-Thomas Awards*, an annual award for excellence in publishing given out by ***Publishers Weekly***. According to ***Publishers Weekly***'s **Miriam Phelps**, Fantagraphics was nominated "for its trade paperback editions of some of the best comic-book artists of the past twenty years, including **R. Crumb, Daniel Clowes**, and **Jaime** and **Gilbert Hernandez**." "The nomination meant a great deal to us personally, of course," Fantagraphics co-publisher **Kim Thompson** said, "but beyond that, it signals another small victory for the perception of comics as a legitimate, adult, mainstream medium."

LEAP OF FAITH

Beautiful Stories For Ugly Children has a reputation for offbeat tales; writer **Dave Louapre** and artist **Dan Sweetman** rarely take a "standard approach" to anything they write. That's why we knew there had to be a catch when we read the description editor **Mark Nevelow** gave of ***Beautiful Stories #9***. It's a poignant little tale of high school students getting ready for their junior prom. As Jack and Mary Beaumont prepare for the big event, getting ready to meet their dates, their father came in to have a little chat with them. As he begins to talk about instincts and destinies, their attention wavers. Then Mrs. Beaumont steps in to finish the talk.

"What your father is so pathetically trying to say, kids,' Mrs. Beaumont interrupted, 'is that tomorrow, at the Founders Day picnic, we're all leaping to our deaths from the cliffs above the shore. The entire town. That's about the gist of it. That's what your dad meant by 'instinct.' It's something we all have to do to preserve the species.'" You see, Jack and Mary are lemmings...



Will Jack and Mary join the town in this little **plunge du morte**? Even worse, will all of this spoil the prom? You'll have to find out on February 8th, when ***Beautiful Stories Fo: Ugly Children #9*** hits the comics racks.

DC CONTINUES SERIES WITH GREATEST HARDCOVERS DUO

Remember back in the halcyon days of the Silver Age, when a superhero crossover was a noteworthy event that really meant something? That "special-event" status of crossover adventures in years past was at least partially the motivation for the upcoming ***Greatest Superhero Team-Up Stories Ever Told*** hardcover from DC.

According to Mike Gold of DC, "Years ago, the concept was so unique...that we simply had to buy the comic. Today...crossovers happen all the time, but they are still events...sophisticated continuity allows us opportunities to reintroduce long-lost characters...a crossover or team-up must have a story worthy of the event. We have grown to expect these meetings." Those special-event stories are spotlighted in this 288-page hardcover that includes such well-remembered meetings as the JLA-JSA, Superman and Swamp Thing, and Adam Strange and Hawkman, among others. ***The Greatest Superhero Team-Up Stories Ever Told*** is set for November 30th release, with a cover price of $24.95; it will feature a new cover by **Carmine Infantino and Dave DeVries**. It is the fourth volume in the ***Greatest Stories*** hardcover series.

Two weeks later, DC will follow it up with the fifth volume, ***The Greatest Golden Age Stories Ever Told***. This hardcover features 22 classic stories from the 30's, 40's, and early 50's. **Roy Thomas**, who writes the introduction to this book, says, "...every fan knows that when someone refers to 'The Golden Age of Comics'...he's talking about some decades-past time when comic books and super-heroes were both new and shining things. This book opts for what might be termed a 'consensus-historical' view of the Golden Age--i.e. anything from the mid-30's through about 1951..." Superman, Batman, the Flash, Green Lantern, the Justice Society, and others will be presented in this book, which will be available on December 14th--making both ***Greatest Stories*** editions great Christmas-gift ideas. ***The Greatest Golden-Age Stories Ever Told***, the fifth volume in the ***Greatest Stories*** series, will be priced at $24.95, and will feature a new cover by **Jerry Ordway**.

THE LUCK OF THE IRISH

Irish McCalla is well known to many television and comics fans as the star of the ***Sheena, Queen of the Jungle***. While the series has been off the air for the better part of three decades, younger fans might recognize the Sheena name because of the 1980's film the series inspired. For older fans, though, Irish McCalla *is* Sheena.

In ***TV's Sheena Irish McCalla***, a 56-page tribute volume published by AC Comics, writers **Bill Black** and **Bill Feret** look at the career of Irish McCalla. The book is illustrated with many photos in black and white and and in color; some of these photos are previously unpublished.

In addition, Irish herself has contributed a new interview for the book, in which she took an active interest. Irish McCalla tells of her experiences in the jungles of Mexico during the filming of Sheena.

TV's Sheena Irish McCalla, a $12.95 8.5" x 11" publication, is printed on 110-lb. glossy paper for the finest reproduction quality. It has full color covers and some interior color plates; look for it in December.

AUSTEN EXPLORES WORLD OF STRIPS

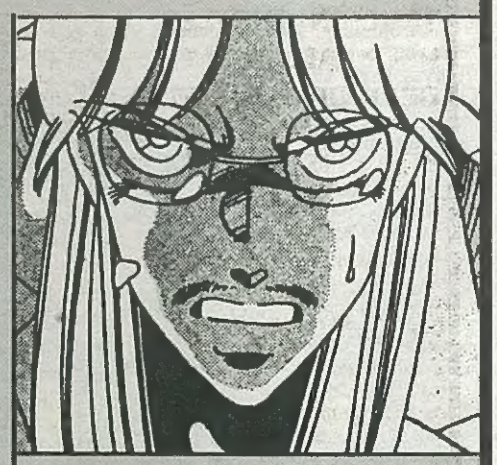
Chuck Austen is a popular comics artist who is well known for his adventure-superhero work. Many of his fans will be pleasantly surprised to see his new series, ***Strips***, published by Rip Off Press--because there are no superheroes and no action adventure. Instead, there's a lively, sexy, adult story of a college-student- comic-strip-artist named Zack Kearney, whose attitude toward higher education can be summed up in five words: "Great way to meet girls." Zack's strip that he does for his college newspaper centers around himself, his friends, and his experiences in the dorms.

Strips isn't a humor strip, exactly; it's much more of a slice-of-life strip about Zack and his life. In the first issue, for instance, the plot centers on Zack's plans to break up with his girlfriend of the past year. He has every intent to make the break clean and painless--but as with all plans of this sort, it doesn't work quite the way he intended... ***Strips***, a bi-monthly 32-page black and white comic written and drawn by Chuck Austen, will begin its run in November. The book is intended for adults because, as Rip Off Press says, "it's about life...it's about love...it's about sex." Each issue will be priced at $2.50.

BURNING EARTH HEATS UP NOW'S TERMINATOR SERIES

NOW Comics admits that sales on the ***Terminator*** series had started to flatten a little bit towards the final issues of the run. That trend most assuredly didn't continue to the new ***Terminator: Burning Earth*** limited series, though: according to **Tony Caputo**, NOW publisher, sales orders for the first issue surpass the totals for the original Terminator premiere issue and have actually matched the sales totals for NOW's superhot ***Green Hornet*** series.

Terminator: The Burning Earth is set to begin in December, and according to NOW, it will be *much* closer in mood to the original ***Terminator*** film. The mini-series will be written by **Ron Fortier** and painted by **Alexander Ross**.



HORROR, THY NAME IS HOROBI

Horobi, the previously-announced horror series from Viz comics, has been delayed for a couple of months--but it is definitely on the 1990 schedule, complete with a fan-favorite writer to handle the English adaptations.

Len Wein will be adapting ***Horobi*** into English when the series begins in March. Each issue of the ***Horobi: Book One*** series will feature a whopping 72 pages of comics material; the eight-issue series will be priced at $3.75.

"Len was the obvious choice for this project," Viz editor **Jerry Novick** said. "I was a great fan of his original Swamp Thing and his time as a top creator in the field attests to his skill as a writer. The horror genre, though, is where I think Len shines the brightest."

Horobi is originally written by **Yoshihisa Tagami**, the creator of ***Grey***. Viz will follow up the first ***Horobi*** series with ***Horobi: Book Two***. Why the two-book limited series? "The reason for this is simple," Novick said. "Tagami hasn't finished the story yet. Like ***Nausica***, we went after a title that was fresh--a classic in the making." Viz hopes to begin publishing the second series shortly after the completion of Book One. ***Horobi*** is a tale of an ancient evil which haunts two different bloodlines in Japan. This curse empowers its victims to manifest their own nightmares on the physical plane. Each family is set on destroying the other; one family for the good of the world, one for their own personal gain.

DELUXE COLLECTION MARKS DEADRAT'S RETIREMENT(?)

Deadrat--gone forever? Hey, this is comic books, so nothing is forever--but it looks like Deadrat may be leaving us for the foreseeable future. According to Fantagraphics, when they release their ***Collected Gnatrat*** trade paperback in December, which will feature the first three Gnatrat books along with a great deal of new material and framing sequences, Deadrat will be dropping out of sight.

The Collected Gnatrat will feature all the Gnatrat material except for the recent ***Gnatrat: The Movie*** from Innovation; it will also contain character sketches, promotional drawings, and "more Gnatrat stuff than you can shake a stick at," according to Fantagraphics. Naturally, all the extra material will be the work of Birmingham, AL artist **Mark Martin**, Gnatrat's zany creator. The entire comic-book-sized softcover will be available for the bargain price of $9.95. Look for it in time for Christmas.

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NEWSBRIEFS

TRUCKIN' TURTLES HELP PALLADIUM GEAR UP NEW TITLES

Palladium Books, which has some problems late last year and early this year with late games releases, has proudly notified ***CSN*** that they're back on schedule--and they hope to stay that way! In addition, there are some new Palladium releases sure to appeal to comics fans.

Truckin' Turtles, a ***Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles*** supplement scheduled for late November release, is the first supplement since last spring's ***Transdimensional Turtles***. It also happens to be the first full-length adventure sourcebook for the game. This book will be priced at $7.95, and will feature an eye-catching cover by **Kevin Long**.

Lancer's Rockers, a mid-December release, is an adventure/sourcebook set in the Invid-Sentinels era of the Robotech Universe. The book has four adventures which feature the most popular characters from the TV/comic book series, as well as half a dozen all-new mecca. In ***Lancer's Rockers***, rock star-rebel warriors use their "instrumecha" to battle the evil Krugatch and find the enigmatic Lancer. The game also include rules for role-playing rock concerts (no foolin'!). The 48-page book will be priced at $7.95.

Palladium also has a fantasy adventure-sourcebook on its coming release schedule. ***Further Adventures In the Northern Wilderness*** gives gamers more information on the Wolfen Empire. Tom Miller has prepared the dramatic cover for this book, which will be available in January, 1990, for $7.95.

Incidentally, in the future, all Palladium Game Books releases will bear the ***Megaverse*** imprint to remind readers that the role-playing game rules used in all Palladium Books is basically one master system. Palladium hopes that this Megaverse imprint will also make it clear to players that the games are flexible and can dovetail into each other. For example, a monster from ***Beyond the Supernatural***, a Palladium release, will appear in ***Truckin' Turtles***.

MAGNETO NOT ATTRACTED TO RED SKULL

The Red Skull is all set to appear in next year's Captain America film--but he may not survive long enough to do so, if Magneto has his way! In ***Captain America #367***, on sale December 7th, Magneto battles the Red Skull to make him pay for his Nazi war atrocities. This story, a part of the Acts of Vengeance series, is also tightly intertwined with the "Acts" events in Avengers and Avengers West Coast. Sub-Mariner and Crossbones also guest-star in this **Gruenwald-Dwyer-Bulanadi** extravaganza.

SUPERBOY SOARS FROM SMALL SCREEN TO COMIC SHOP SHELVES

It was forty years ago that Superboy first made his comics appearance; forty years later, after a comics hiatus, the Boy of Steel will return to the comics shelves in December in an all-new ***Superboy*** series produced in conjunction with the syndicated hit ***Superboy*** television show.

Superboy will not directly tie in with Superman continuity, although **Bob Wayne** of DC promises that their will be an indirect connection that will develop in the book. The series will instead emphasize the elements of the syndicated tv show, featuring supporting characters Lana Lang, T.J. White, and Andy McAlistar, all students at Shuster University. The series will focus on Superboy's freshman year at college--but the first issue gives Superboy little time to settle in to academic life, as a meteor causes problems that only Superboy can handle.

Superboy #1, on sale December 14th, will be written by **John Moore**, pencilled by **Jim Mooney**, and inked by **Ty Templeton**; it will feature a photo cover of television ***Superboy*** **Christopher Gerard**. Each issue will be priced at $1.

WHAT A FILL-IN!

When Daredevil has a fill-in story, what a fill-in it is! ***Daredevil #277***, due out on December 7th, is written by series author **Ann Nocenti**; joining her as guest artist for the fill-in issue is illustrator par excellence **Rick Leonardi**, whose work is all too rarely seen nowadays. In the Nocenti/Leo-nardi/Williamson story, Matt Murdock tries to help a couple cope with a debilitating disease. The special fill-in stand-alone issue is not a part of ongoing ***Daredevil*** continuity; Marvel will resume normal continuity in January.

FUGITIVE CREATORS CHANNEL EFFORTS INTO ONE-SHOT

Charles Marshall and Greg Cravens, the masterminds behind Caliber Press' ***Fugitive*** series that has appeared in ***Caliber Presents***, have been very busy of late. Their creation, which is the story of a madcap chase that takes its participants through various television universes, has been given its own one-shot set for November release. This ***Fugitive One-Shot*** will present some strangely familiar television worlds: for example, the lead story will take us into a POW camp in World War II--a camp run by a not-too-bright commandant and a sergeant who sees "nothing." Other stories will feature new worlds and new artists. **Mitch Foust** will take readers into the home of an almost-moribund family and their friendly, lurking butler; **Jim O'Barr** and **Guy Davis** will present the world of a science fiction tv series whose members have been on a "five-year mission" for twenty two years now.

GUEST ARTISTS SHOW THEY KHAN ILLUSTRATE THE PANDA

Panda Khan #5, set for early December release, will be a visual treat for Panda Khan fans; not only will this issue feature a full-length Panda Khan adventure, "Enter the Dragon...Exit the Dragon!", but it will also feature special guest-artist pin-ups by **Mark Martin, Gary Fields, Donald Simpson, Tom Luth, Joshua Quagmire, Bryan Talbot, Jim Valentino, Phil Yeh**, and **Dave Garcia**. ***Panda Khan*** will also be appearing in a special 8-page backup story in an upcoming issue Usagi Yojimbo. "Dragon's Hide," written by **Monica Sharp** and illustrated by **Dave Garcia**, is a clever story focusing on much-needed assistance from a dragon...--or maybe not. You'll have to read it for yourself to find out just what's going on.

SATURDAY IN THE PARK

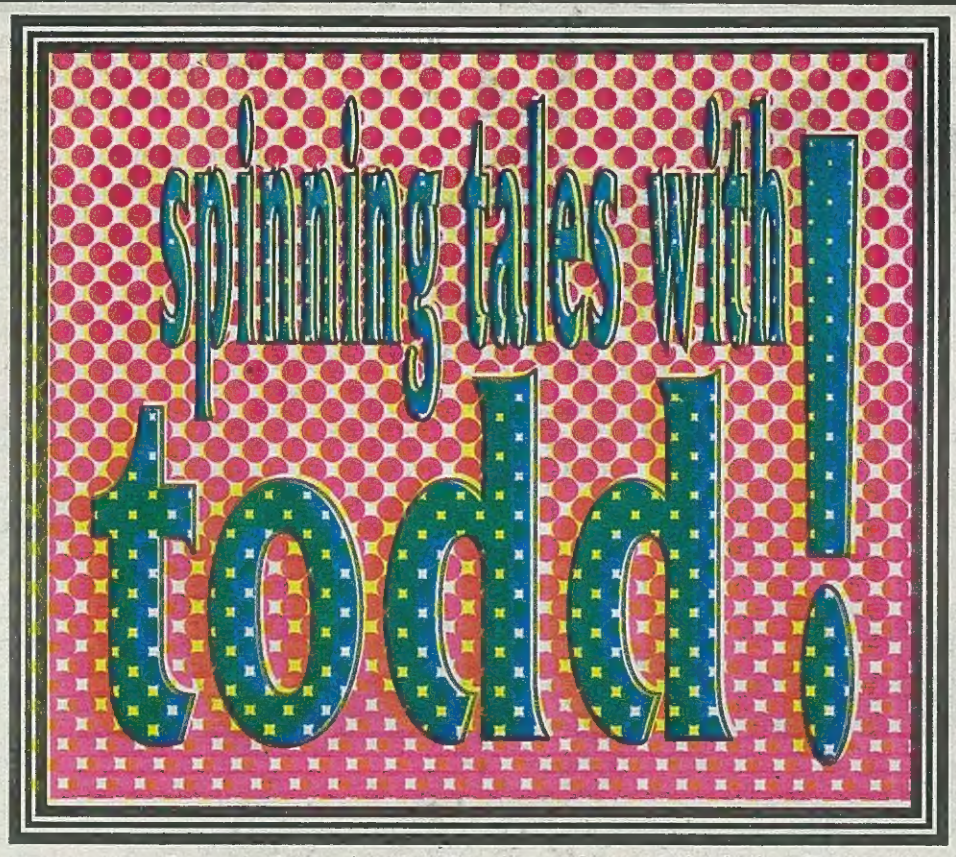
If you're a Punisher fan, then you know about the fateful day that Frank Castle took his family to Central Park for a picnic. That day's deadly events led to the nascence of the Punisher. But what if Frank Castle's family *hadn't* died that day?

What If #10, set for December 21st release, explores the events that grow out of this simple change in the Marvel Universe. In this story by **Murray, Levins**, and **McLeod**, Frank Castle becomes a policeman instead of a vigilante. As a policeman, he uncovers the same sort of corruption that he investigated as the Punisher; this time, the corruption is within the police department itself. Nonetheless, Castle is determined to unveil the criminal activities; however, that's the sort of determination that creates enemies. Before too long, those enemies have given Frank Castle an all-new reason to seek revenge.

"What If The Punisher's Family Hadn't Been Killed In Central Park?" is the latest in the ever-popular series of alternate-continuity adventures that make up ***What If?*** Incidentally, ***What If?*** has proven to be one of 1989's biggest successes for Marvel; perhaps it's stories like this, along with the Wolverine and X-Men stories that have recently appeared, that contribute to that popularity.

CSN SPOTLIGHT

by Brett Brooks



Anyone who doesn't know who Todd McFarlane is should find a new place to live-- caves can be so very damp... McFarlane first began to attract attention with his work on ***Infinity Inc.*** *for DC; not too long after that, he illustrated the final segments of* ***Batman: Year Two,*** *then moved on to Marvel. His first major fan following came as he illustrated Peter David's scripts on The Incredible Hulk; it was with* ***Amazing Spider-Man,*** *however, that he really achieved his fame Todd is just coming off of an extended run on* ***Amazing Spider-Man,*** *and took some time out to talk with us about his past, and what his future plans are.*

What can you tell us about the history of Todd and Spider-Man?

The History of Todd and Spider-Man, huh? Well, the history of Todd and Spider-Man is pretty much the history of Todd and any other comic book that he's done, in that I don't really have a passion for any one character. I guess that comes from the fact that I was an older kid when I began collecting. So, when I ended up getting the assignment for the ***Amazing Spider-Man,*** Spider-Man was, at that point, just that-- an assignment. No better or no worse than anything else that I did.

But I find that every book that I do, once I get into it--and it usually takes me about four or five months to get into an assignment-- tends to go off into a direction that's my own to make it a little more unique. And the next thing I know, I think that Spider-Man is the greatest guy there is, and there is nothing else I would rather be doing. But, I'm sure that if they asked me to do, say, Iron Man, after four or five months I would feel the same way about him.

There's really no magic to Spider-Man, though. The more I think it over, the more I realize that I just followed a plan. I gave the editor a list of things that I wanted to change on Spider-Man-- y'know, make the eyes a *little* larger, add some webbing to his costume, and make it a bit blacker, all those things that you see-- basically I wanted to make it a little closer to the way Ditko made it for those first two or three issues.

Those first three issues of ***Spider-Man,*** Ditko just wasn't aware that Spider-Man was going to turn out to be the bigshot character that he turned out to be. So, one of the reasons that I really like those issues, is that they're kinda erratic, y'-know-- they look *funky*. After about fifteen issues, Steve had the look down pat. Those first issues had that nice, black Spider-Man that we've seen for awhile.

How did you end up getting the job on Amazing Spider-Man?

Well, timing is everything in this business. I was up at the New York office, and I had just finishing-up doing ***Batman: Year Two,*** and, at that point, I was able to pencil two issues a month, so I was looking around for another book. I was doing ***Incredible Hulk*** at the time, and wanted a second title. Some people think that, when you quit one book, you can go and ask for any book and get it. But the truth is, to *get* a book, you have to be there when somebody is *leaving* a book. Usually what happens is that you end up flipping people from one book to another and vise-versa.

I happened to be at the office at a point where the Spider-Man books were all going through creative changes, and they couldn't get any stability on them. I came through and told them that I was looking for a book, and if they had an opening I would take it, y'know. I wanted one of the three ***Spider-Man*** books--at that time I didn't know that it would be ***Amazing***--and then they phored a couple of months later and offer me ***Amazing.*** I figured that I would have to start on one of the other two titles and work my way up to ***Amazing*** after a couple of years, but they gave me a big break right off the bat.

You're leaving Amazing Spider-Man to do a new book What can you tell us about that?

Well, are you ready for this? The name of the book is...***Spider-Man.*** Rough, huh? It's supposed be called just ***Spider-Man.*** No ***Amazing,*** no ***Web,*** no ***Spectacular,*** just...***Spider-Man.*** So now, everybody who's got Amazing Spider-Man filed under "S" is going to have to move it.

Tentatively, the book is supposed to come out at the end of April/ beginning of May of next year [it has now been scheduled for early June]. I'll be writing it, and that will give me total control over the book.

One of the things that we are doing with this book is that it will not tie into the continuity of the other three books--more for my own inexperience in writing than anything else. The editors don't want to tie me down with the other books, and make me cross-reference everything. This will leave

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me with a chance to get out there and tell stories and learn the trade as I go.

From my point of view, it will be neat to do this book because the format will allow some bleed capacity, and I can do some real artsy type things on it. I'm gonna try to do something here; whether I succeed--well, only time will tell. I hope to just make it different from the other three ***Spider-Man*** books.

I want to aim ***Spider-Man*** more at the direct sales market. We're gonna try to see if we can't hit a little bit older audience on this book. Not "mature readers" or anything, but not "Spider-Man versus the villain-of-the-month book." Again, whether I can pull it off or not is secondary. My biggest concern is to try to justify a fourth ***Spider-Man*** book. There's really no reason in my mind to come up with a fourth title if it's going to be like the other three. So, I figure if we do something a little different on this one, even if people don't like it, there isn't going to be a lack of ***Spider-Man*** stuff out there. They can just ignore my book and buy the other three if they don't like the quirky direction that I'm going in.

Have you got anything specifically in mind for the book plot wise?

Yeah. What they want me to do is a kind of "mini-series-within-a-series," y'know? Do a five part thing called...um..."the Potato-Man Saga," and then you would get "the Dough-Boy Saga," or something like that. I think that's good, because it lets me get an idea and then just kinda go off with it. The one thing that I still have to come to terms with is that there are three other Spidey books, and so he's fighting guys in those other books, which can be a problem.

In the first five issues, I wanted to have the Green Goblin as the villain to start the book off with a really classic confrontation. Reinstate the Goblin as Spidey's main villain; y'know, make the Green Goblin to Spider-Man what the Joker is to Batman. But, the Goblin is already spoken for in the other three books, and, as a matter of fact, their going to do quite the opposite with him-- he's going to become a good-guy from what I hear.

So, there's five issues out the door. I already had everything worked out and had written down notes for the story, but now, it's gone. And now, all of a sudden, I find myself wanting to bring back the Owl-- the old Daredevil villain. I figure that, since Kingpin has pretty much left the Spidey books, he needs to be replaced. And, I figured that, since DD stole a Spidey villain, it's only fair that he be replaced with a Daredevil bad-guy.

Unfortunately, I still don't feel that the Owl is the right guy to start off a new book with. Again, I've got a storyline with him, but that probably won't be used until issues six through ten-- maybe just in the background, and then bringing him out to the forefront a little bit later.

I want to start this book off with a bang, but I find that you get limited. I was talking to Jim Salicrup-- the editor on the book-- and I went down the list of bad-guys, and it was like, "No, sorry Todd. Can't use Green Goblin." *Boom!* I didn't want to use the Owl right off the bat, so I was in a lurch. It seemed like everybody else was being used. The Hobgoblin was over here, we had just used the Red Skull, Doctor Doom is in the FF, and then all the other "classic" Spider-Man bad-guys are either coming up, or will be coming up just before my book comes out.

I've got to go back to New York for a sort of "villain draft," so that I can get somebody. I can't be stuck with whatever's left over when the other three books are done! Now, it's like, "Todd, you can maybe use one of these guys." As it is, I can look forward to doing that great revival of White Rabbit. Hah! We went through the list of all the Spidey bad-guys, and there just wasn't much left.

So, I kind of played with it loose and fancy-free. What we're starting with-- and hopefully be pulling off-- is a *villainess*. I'm going to see if I can make the baddest-of-the-bad female in the Marvel universe, because there's no female equivalent of Doctor Doom. Whenever you think of bad-people, you go through a list of about four or five, but none of them is *ever* female. If I can't pull it off with her, I'll come up with a completely new female and try to use her as "the Big Female." The character that we're using in the first five issues is visually along the lines of--well, you know the movie ***Ghostbusters?*** The girl with the red eyes at the end of the movie? The scary looking one with the punk haircut? That's who we're trying to make this look like. Y'know, somebody that, if you met her in a corner, even though she may have a terrific body and whatever else, she would scare the hell out of you.

LIke I said, there's no big female bad-guy-- or bad-gal I guess, in the Marvel Universe. That's my goal. Oh, and we'll also have a little of the Lizard running in and out of the first five issues. Which should make people happy.

I started collecting kinda late-- when I was seventeen-- but still, I remember all of the classic villains for whatever reason. So, a lot of the guys who have been invented in the last five years, I don't really have any ties to; we did Venom, but that wasn't really a big deal. He's just the same black costume with bigger teeth. I think that the Hobgoblin is kinda neat looking, but for the most part, I don't have any kind of keen interest in anybody that's been invented in the past five years. Right now, I want to take my shot at all of the "oldies-but-goldies" first.

One of the reasons that I wanted to get into the writing, too, was that when you're not writing the book you might not get to draw a character the amount that you want to. I mean, David Michelinie was great for bringing back all of the great villains, but sometimes he would just bring them in for four pages when I wanted to do forty, or for forty when I wanted to do four. Now, I can draw these guys as much or as little as I want. Having complete control of the book also means getting to draw what you want to draw, so that you don't get bored with it.

With some of the old villains, because they were drawn twenty or twenty-five years ago in a style that was a little different than it is today, have a lot of room for interpretation. If you take a character who was recently created by a Byrne or Perez or Adams or somebody like that, they've put in all the detail and all of the neat little effects that we're used to today, so you can't really add much to it. With the old guys, there's still some room for interpretation, and that's why I like 'em.

In addition to Spider-Man, you're working with Peter David on a Wolverine series aren't you?

Uh...no. I was supposed to, but one of the reasons that I quit ***Amazing*** was to give me a chance to write my own stuff, and, after getting off that book, I couldn't see doing eight parts of a story using somebody else's idea. If I were going to do another forty or fifty pages with another writer, I would have just stayed on ***Spider-Man*** for another few issues. I phoned up Terry Cavanaugh, the editor on ***Marvel Comics Presents***, and said that I would still do a Wolverine story, but would he let me do the writing on it? So, what they're going to do is pass Peter David's story on to some other artist, and then, once I get under way on the new ***Spider-Man*** book, I'll sit down and start work on what I'm thinking will be a six-parter with Wolverine. I've already go the story worked out from beginning to end, and it should be, like, forty-eight pages, and, again, I'll get to set it at my own pace.

Peter writes good stuff--well, all the writers I've worked with write good stuff--it's just that, once you finally

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get a chance to do a character that you want, you want to do it your way. That's one of the reasons I'm getting into the writing, just so that I have more control. If I want to do big splash panels, or do big panels of eyeballs for five pages, I can. I can do whatever I want to do.

So, there's no plans to work with any other writers in the near future?

No, I don't think so. I mean, we've been banging around for a year this ***Spider-Man/Batman*** project that Frank Miller and Steve Gerber would write, but right now there seems to be a lot of red tape in the way. If something like that came up, I would be a fool to not to work with somebody like Frank. But for the most part, I think that once I start doing my own writing, I won't want to go back.

This way, if you *do* like it, I can't pass the buck, and I'll have to take some of the compliments; but likewise, if you *hate* it, then again, I'm going to have to take the criticism. I won't be able to say, "it was a bad ink job," or, "oh, the story sucked," or something like that. I mean, I'm going to be the guy who did it all, so I'm going to have to face the brunt of the attack. Which is okay; I don't mind taking the criticism for something that is poorly done if I did it.

Speaking of Batman, anything you want to comment on about the days back at DC?

Well, I was on ***Infinity, Inc.*** for a long time, and I would like to thank Roy Thomas for letting me go off on some tangents artistically. I was using a lot of graphics which, in hindsight, probably distracted from the story which is why I don't use the graphics experiments to the extent that I did on ***Infinity,*** where it was separate and apart from the story. At least it allowed me to go off into a different direction and give the reader a different look--and that has basically been the direction of my whole career!

Everything I touch, I try to do a little differently. Again, that's not to say that my stuff is any better, or any worse, than anyone else's; I leave that up to the people buying the comic books. If sales go down, I have to assume that they didn't like it, and if sales go up, I have to assume that they did like it. When I took over ***Infinity,*** Roy Thomas was kind enough to let me do whatever I wanted to do, as long as I got the pages in on time. And then they pretty much did the same thing on ***Batman: Year Two.***

With the success of some the books that I've been working on with Peter David and David Michelinie, they've let me get a little further away from that structured look and kind of get a little more *designey* and *artsy.*

What was the situation with Invasion? You did all of the first issue, and then only part of the second, and none of the third.

Yeah. No dirty gossip or anything. There's no great unknown secret with that one. I took on that project, and it was just a combination of me doing forty-eight ***Invasion*** pages a month, and then doing the bi-weekly ***Spider-Man*** at the same time. I was penciling two issues of ***Spider-Man,*** and inking two issues of ***Spider-Man,*** and doing covers for the books, and drawing forty-eight pages of ***Invasion.*** So, I was really pumping out pages--up to like a hundred-and-twenty pages a month. You may say "wow!" but I don't say that in a bragging fashion. I almost say it with sadness. Yeah, I can turn out that much work, but when you do turn out that much work, something gives--and in my case, sleep is number one, and quality is number two. The quality just wasn't there.

One of the biggest reasons--if not *the* biggest reason--that I got off ***Amazing*** was that it goes bi-weekly every summer. I am just not ready to go bi-weekly, because that means that for six issues a year I'm putting out stuff that's below the standards that I know I can put out. I would rather make less money and be satisfied with it personally, than just get the book out for the sake of getting the book out. Now there's a project for the future! I would never profess to be able to paint like Dave McKean, but it would be neat to do a project like that, where you could sit down and do exactly what you want and then have the full process color and the whole bit. I wouldn't mind doing some sort of project that I could have Dave paint-- but I better see if I can write first...

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CSN QUICKLIST

The following comics are scheduled for release on the dates given; unfortunately, it has been more and more common recently for a good many books to run at least one week late. Hardcovers, graphic novels, and prestige/bookshelf format series tend to have the most problem with late release, but virtually every title has been plagued with delays in the past six months. Furthermore, different parts of the country will receive different books at different times, since books are printed in the eastern US, the western US, and in Canada; depending on where your local comics shop is located in relation to the publisher's printing site, your shop may receive these titles later--or earlier--than the given date. Also, some smaller publishers are notoriously late on their releases; the information we use is generally based on schedules supplied by publishers, but these may actually be off by 2 or 3 issues from the actual issues released this month. If you have any questions about delayed books, talk to the friendly people at your local comics shop; when *CSN* is notified in time, we will make changes in our checklist.

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- ❑ ***Aliens Collection Volume 1*** Dark Horse $10.95
- ❑ ***Aliens Vs. Predator 1*** Dark Horse $2.50
- ❑ ***Alpha Flight 80*** 11/16 Marvel $1.50
- ❑ ***Animal Man 19*** 11/30 DC $1.50
- ❑ ***Appleseed Book Three 4*** 11/30 Eclipse $2.75
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- ❑ ***Captain Harlock 2*** Eternity $1.95
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- ❑ ***Checkmate 24*** 11/30 DC $1.50
- ❑ ***Cheval Noir 5*** Dark Horse $3.50
- ❑ ***Chronicles of Panda Khan 5*** Abacus $2
- ❑ ***Classic X-Men 43*** 11/30 Marvel $1.75
- ❑ ***Conan 228*** 11/23 Marvel $1
- ❑ ***Conan Saga 34*** 11/30 Marvel $2.25
- ❑ ***Count Duckula 9*** 11/30 Marvel $1
- ❑ ***Crime Classics 13*** Eternity $2.25
- ❑ ***Crow 5*** Caliber $1.95
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- ❑ ***Cyberpunk GN*** Innovation $6.95
- ❑ ***Damage Control II 3*** 11/30 Marvel $1
- ❑ ***Destroyer 4*** 11/23 Marvel $2.25
- ❑ ***Detective Comics 610*** 11/23 DC $1
- ❑ ***Dick Tracy Weekly 111*** Blackthorne $2.50
- ❑ ***Dick Tracy Weekly 112*** Blackthorne $2.50
- ❑ ***Dilton's Strange Science 4*** 11/23 Archie .95
- ❑ ***Dirty Pair: Biohazards TPB*** 11/23 Eclipse $9.95
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- ❑ ***Dominion 2*** 11/23 Eclipse $225
- ❑ ***Doom Patrol 29*** 11/30 DC $1.50
- ❑ ***Dragonlance Comics 15*** 11/23 DC $1.50
- ❑ ***Eightball 2*** Fantagraphics $2
- ❑ ***El Diablo 5*** 11/23 DC $1.50
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- ❑ ***Ex-Mutants 15*** Eternity $1.95
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Todd McFarlane interview Part Two

Plus an exclusive preview of *Gotham by Gaslight*

and the *CSN Charts!*

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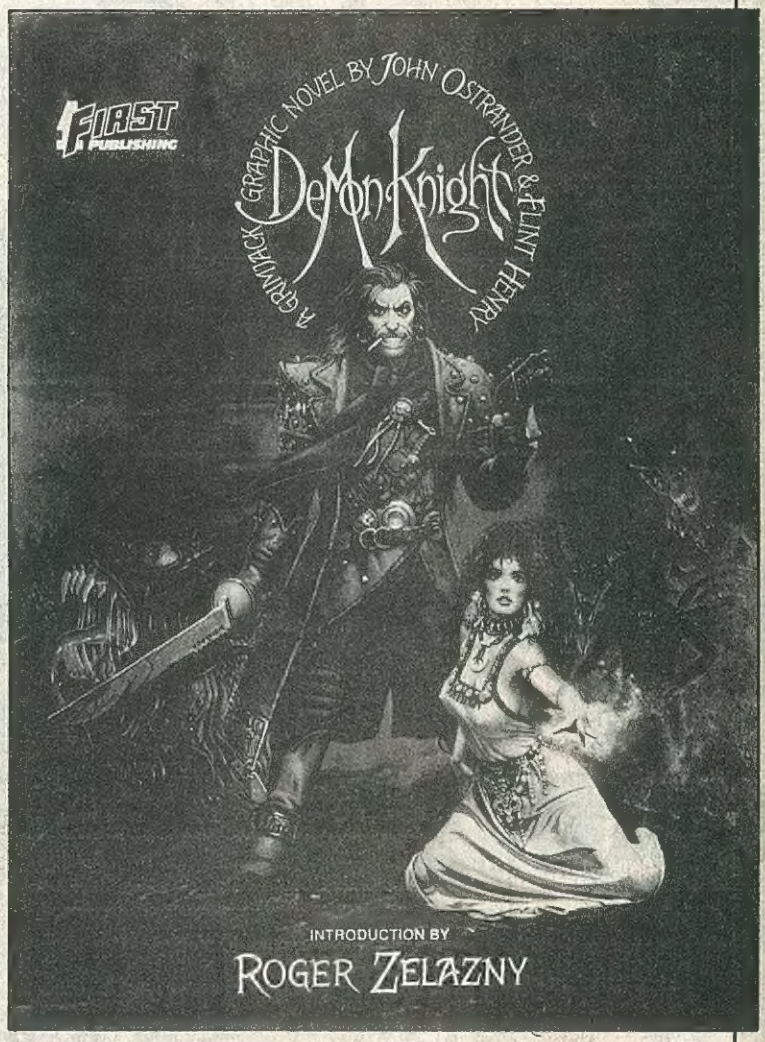
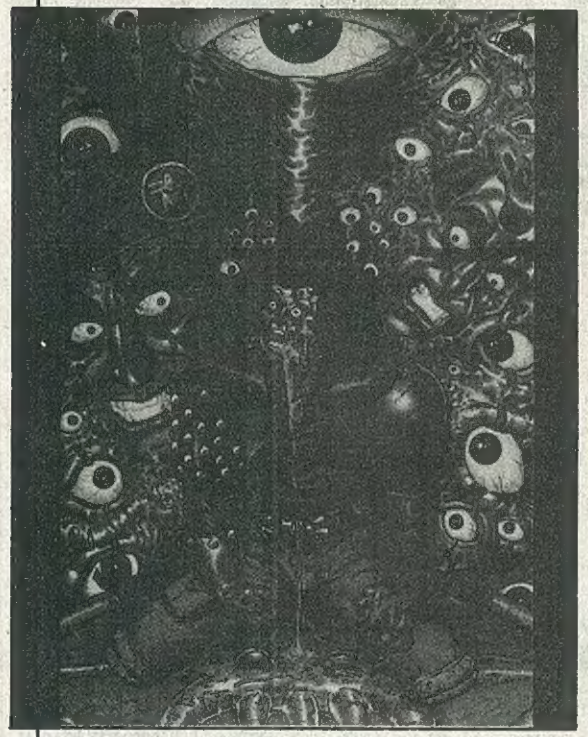
The Demon Wars according to GrimJim Twilley!
By **John Ostrander** and **Flint Henry**. Cover painting by **Keith Parkinson**. Introduction by **Roger Zelazny**.





GRIMJACK POSTER
GrimJim Twilley's worst nightmare!
By **Flint Henry** and **Bruce Timm**.
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GRIMJACK #68
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Cover by **Flint Henry**.

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